

TENTATIVE

LTCY 527: Literacy Learning and Cultural Differences Summer 2012 3 credit hours

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Prerequisite: LTCY 519

Course description: Introduction to social factors, cultural factors, and aspects of language that affect teaching and learning of literacy, particularly in reading, writing, and the language arts; application of multicultural perspectives to curriculum development and classroom literacy practices.

Rationale: This course provides teachers with the necessary skills and information to meet standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association as they relate to increasingly diverse demographics in the United States (NCTE & IRA, Standards for the Language Arts, #9, 1996; Excellent Reading Teachers: A Position Statement of the International Reading Association, April 2000). The purpose of the course is to examine human universals as well as cultural and ethnic distinctions as they relate to the development of literacy. The course is further designed to provide a foundation for strengthening the understanding, skills, and techniques professionals need to interact and work effectively with diverse children and families.

Course objectives, Instructional methods, and assessment:

This course is intended to help students:

- a. Understand the historical and contemporary perspectives toward cultural diversity as they relate to dialect, language use, and literacy development.
- b. Understand concepts relating to cultural diversity (e.g., culture, ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, and gender) and comprehend why these concepts are important to professionals working with children and families.
- c. Understand the cultural, socioeconomic, and familial characteristics of

- major cultural groups represented in the United States.
- d. Learn how multicultural perspectives affect language use and development as it relates to literacy.
 - e. Develop/expand awareness of their own cultural perspectives and the impact of those perspectives toward others.
 - f. Develop strategies for working with families in encouraging literacy development.
 - g. Critically analyze and interpret research utilizing culturally diverse samples.

Kentucky Experienced Teacher Standards related to this course:

- Standard 1: Demonstrates Professional Leadership
- Standard 2: Demonstrates Knowledge of Content
- Standard 3: Designs/Plans Instruction
- Standard 4: creates/ Maintains Learning Climate
- Standard 5: Implements/ Manages Instruction
- Standard 6: Assesses and Communicates Learning Results
- Standard 7: Reflects/ Evaluates Teaching/Learning
- Standard 8: Collaborates with Colleagues/ Parents/ Others
- Standard 9: Engages in Professional Development
- Standard 10: Demonstrates Implementation of Technology

Course Disposition Statement(s)

The teacher recognizes her/his professional responsibility for engaging in and supporting appropriate professional practices for self and colleagues.

The teacher is committed to the continuous development of individual students' abilities and considers how different motivational strategies are likely to encourage this development for each student.

The teacher has a well-grounded framework for understanding cultural and community diversity and knows how to learn about and incorporate student's experiences, cultures, and community resources into instruction.

The teacher is committed to continuous learning and engages in professional discourse about subject matter knowledge and children's learning of the discipline.

Required Textbook:

Helms, J. (2008). *A Race is a Nice Thing to Have*, 2nd ed. Hanover, Massachusetts: Microtraining Associates. ISBN: 978-0-917276-13-2

Readings for the course (PDFs) are located in the "Content" section of Blackboard.

Course Topics:*Theories/Perspectives on Cultural Diversity and Literacy Instruction*

Introduction to the theories and perspectives of literacy instruction with culturally diverse students. This introduction will embrace an expanded definition of literacy to include issues of race, class, gender, and language differences.

Schooling and Diversity

Examination of issues relating to public school structures and systems in providing equitable instruction and learning opportunities for all children.

Historical and current views are presented.

Creating a Literate Community within Diverse Populations

Examination of home and community oral and written literate traditions and practices of students in order to provide a cohesive connection between home and school literacy learning.

Learning Styles and Culturally Diverse Student

Investigation of learning styles of various populations of people whose cultural, ethnic, gender, or class impact literacy learning and achievement in school.

Issues Relating to Tracking and Ability Grouping in Literacy Instruction

Historical and research-based exploration of how practices of tracking and ability grouping have limited the learning opportunities for many students of culturally different backgrounds.

Assessment and Diversity

Investigation of biases relative to all types of assessments with regard to cultural differences and the impact those biases have on educational opportunities for those students.

Valuing Language Differences

Focuses on issues relative to students who speak English as a Second Language, issues of dialect, non-standard forms of English, and alternative communications methods.

Valuing Diversity in Literature

Methods in evaluating, utilizing, and appreciating multiethnic/multicultural literature.

Attendance and Course Requirements:

A. All assignments are due on time. Late assignments will be penalized 20% of their possible point value if submitted within two work days of their due date. Assignments turned in beyond that point will receive 50% of their graded point value.

B. All assignments will be graded for content and mechanics.

C. It is expected that you will read and reflect on required course readings prior to responding to discussion boards. Selected course readings will help you develop the knowledge and theoretical base needed for teaching reading to learners of diverse backgrounds.

D. Students are encouraged to conference with the instructor by phone or by email, if the need arises.

E. All assignments must be typed. Use APA format for assignments. You will lose points if you do not use APA format. (12pt font, 1 inch margins, double-spaced). APA format can be accessed as follows:

- <http://www.apastyle.org/electgeneral.html>
- <http://www.apastyle.org/electsource.html>
- <http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/research/apadocument.html>
- http://www.vanguard.edu/faculty/ddegelman/index.cfm?doc_id=796
- Citation Machine: <http://citationmachine.net/>

F. University policy on academic honesty will be strictly observed.

G. Keep a copy of all assignments. If an assignment is lost, the burden of proof that you completed the assignment rests with you.

H. How much time should I plan to accomplish the tasks within this course? People work at different speeds, rates, and degrees of proficiency. A blanket rule of thumb would be the following:

For full semester on-line course (fall or spring):

- If this were a face-to-face course we would be meeting 2 hours and 45 minutes per week or a total of 41 hours and 15 minutes.
- For graduate courses you should allow a MINIMUM of two hours of outside class work for every one hour of face-to-face (or e-time). That would equal 123 hours and 45 minutes per semester, or approximately 8.26 hours per week (again minimum and depending on how quickly you read, write, synthesize, research, construct).

I. Suggestions for organizing your learning in this course:

- This course is cumulative in many respects and will require multi-tasking.
- It is recommended that you get a 3-ring binder with dividers or a series of file folders.
- Read the directions on the syllabus, follow any recommended links, and then work daily from the calendar -- the calendar has all the due dates and moves you from one task to another.

Evaluation and Grade Assignment:

The final course grade will be based on the following grading scale:

Grading Scale:

- A: 100% - 93% 420- 390 pts.
B: 92% - 85% 389 -357pts.
C: 84% - 75% 356- 315 pts.
D: 74% - 69% 289 -314pts.
F: 68% - 288 or fewer pts.

Course Assignments and Point Values: TOTAL OF 420 POINTS POSSIBLE

1. Participation and Professionalism - 20 points

Active participation through email, virtual chat, and discussion board forums is mandatory! This also includes participation in submitting assignments, collegiality, effort, etc. Professionalism is expected with regard to your electronic communications to one another and to the professor. Your communications should be polite and professional. All tasks will be explained via email, video, and discussion boards as they are introduced in the course. Do not try to do this course in a weekend or a week - it will take the whole time to complete this course. You cannot work ahead of me as we are "traveling" together as a unit through this course.

2. Reflective Mini-Papers - 60 points

You will write reflective papers on several topics in this class. Each of these will be based upon readings and activities that you complete within modules. These are further described within the modules on Blackboard. The topics include identity, race, and privilege.

3. A Race is a Nice Thing to Have Journal – 20 points

As you read, there are exercises within each chapter. These are created to help you grapple with difficult concepts and will help in your own exploration of the topic of race (you can do the exercises in the book or on a piece of paper but won't have to turn in the actual answers to each exercise).

In a word document, write a brief 1-2 sentence response to each activity. Note the number of each activity that you are responding to.

For example:

Exercise 9.2: Racial Moral dilemmas. In completing this exercise I found that.....
(other stems are provided on Blackboard)

This will serve as your "journal" through the book, which you will turn in on Blackboard.

4. Discussion Boards – 30 points

After completing readings in the course, you will respond to prompts on Discussion Boards through Blackboard. Discussion boards will cover topics of race and school reform, children who struggle with reading, and poster presentations of barriers to literacy.

5. Voicethreads - 50 points

You will complete interactive responses to readings and experiences using

www.voicethread.com.

If you do not have an account already, you can follow this link to get signed up.

<https://voicethread.com/groups/subscribe/63695/050186161/>

Please be sure to use your **WKU email address** when signing up!

When you create your voicethreads, you can either video yourself using a Webcam or you can insert a picture and talk over the picture with a microphone. You will need to have access to this technology in order to complete this portion of the course. Voicethreads will cover material on personal introductions, children's literature analysis, instructional practices, and working with diverse populations.

6. Web of Best Practices for working with Diverse Populations – 30 points

As you read the assigned chapters and articles in module 2, you will create a web in which you use "Best practices for working with diverse populations" for the inside of the middle circle and a line coming from that circle for each of the 8 most important teaching strategies/points for you personally that you gleaned from the above 4 sources. Color code the strategies with a key at the bottom of the page to indicate which resource the idea came from. If it came from multiple sources, you can either indicate that with the key or choose the source that was most useful on the specific strategy. Draw lines from each of those 8 strategies to describe exactly how you will enact or enforce the strategy you listed. _

7. Lesson Plan using Multicultural Literature - 30 points

Using a multicultural literature title from one of the websites supplied in Blackboard or from your readings, create a lesson in which you would 1) access prior knowledge before reading, 2) introduce new vocabulary before the reading and then emphasize it within the reading, 3) have students engage in "turn and talk" discussions during the reading, 4) have students engage in a response activity. Be sure to build the lesson using the KCAS that is appropriate for the age group listed and that meaningfully uses the content and message of the text.

8. Strategic Plan to Address Literacy Issue – 100 points

Students will prepare a strategic plan at one of these levels

- global
- national
- state
- community/county
- school

Purpose: The purpose of this task is to allow students to synthesize and construct a strategic plan that details specific solutions, ideas, and considerations for a barrier that has been identified for one of the levels indicated above. As reading professionals our charge is to contribute our expertise not only in the classrooms with our students, but also to recognize that our specialized talents and knowledge base put us in a position to serve others and make an impact in the literate lives of others - close at home or around the globe.

Materials/Resources Needed:

- The culminating event can take the form of a paper (not to exceed 15 pages) or a series of webpages.
- Information for this task should come from previous reading in this course, independent research you have done, all the discussion boards, and instructional conversations we have had during this course.
- A minimum of five (5) **research** articles must be referenced within your paper and included in the bibliography. Articles provided by the instructor of this course are not counted as part of the 5 required references.
- All other resources from electronic and print materials should be referenced (APA style) within the strategic plan and included in the bibliography.

Due from Students:

Your charge in this task is to provide possible solutions, ideas, and considerations regarding a specific "problem" associated with literacy. You might approach this as though you were applying for financial support to help address the problem you have identified. Use all you know and all you have learned to make the case of why this issue should be addressed and how your ideas would help address the problem. Use the following as a framework and **include headings within your paper** for each of these categories:

1. **A justification statement must be written for why the problem needs to be addressed**
2. **The population must be identified and described**
3. **A review of the literature regarding this issue must be written**
4. **Considerations for addressing the issue must be identified**

5. Suggestions for addressing the issue must be enumerated and discussed

6. Resources to aid in addressing this issue must be included

This is the critical performance for this course. You must upload your assignment to the Electronic Portfolio by the due date. Failure to upload to the EP will result in an F in the course. Your paper must be typed in Microsoft Word or saved as a .rtf file and must also be submitted on Blackboard. If you construct a webpage for this assignment, please send Dr. Hulan the URL by email.

9. Theory Meets the Real World Field Experience – 80 points

Purpose: The purpose of this aspect of the course is to have some experiences with diverse populations in an educational setting. Observations and interactions through instruction will allow LTCY 527 students to make connections between research, theory, and the first person experience of application, synthesis, and internalization of key concerns in serving learners who are ethnically, culturally, socially, and otherwise diverse.

Activities for the field experience/service learning may include:

- Working with students:
 1. Observations (kidwatching, discourse analysis, journaling)
 2. Teaching students the strategies and skills needed for reading comprehension
 3. Teaching students the process of writing
 4. Leading book clubs featuring multicultural literature and instructional conversations
 5. Digital Storytelling using multicultural literature
- Working with parents:
 1. Meetings, home visits, and/or focus groups
 2. Interviews
 3. Field notes
 4. Leading book clubs featuring literature/material of interest to parents
- Working with caregivers
 1. Focus groups
 2. Observations
 3. Interviews
 4. Field notes
 5. Leading book clubs featuring literature/material of interest to

professionals

6. Leading professional development sessions/activities for professionals

Before making a final choice among the options for your field experience, discuss this with Dr. Hulan and obtain approval.

Students are expected to make arrangements for their own field experiences. Field experience should occur in community areas where there are diverse populations. Possible programs and areas to explore include community Head Start programs, local housing authority learning centers, and other programs that serve diverse populations. Those interested in conducting their field experience in Bowling Green may wish to choose the Housing Authority Learning Center, the WKU campus Head Start, or the International Center of Bowling Green.

You must obtain permission/agreement to allow you to conduct your field experience in the site. Submit a letter granting you permission to conduct your field experience at your chosen site. The letter must be signed and contain contact information for the director or official responsible for the program. Include a brief description of the site and the population served in your letter. **A minimum of eight (8) hours is required to accomplish the goals for this assignment.** This time will count as service learning and align with WKU's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).

Due from you for this assignment:

An electronic notebook will be submitted weekly on Thursdays in the "Content" section of Blackboard. The entries in your notebook will, in part, depend on the selected field experience project, however, all notebooks will contain some similarities. For instance, entries should be dated and include demographic information regarding the site and the people and the intended purposes of the project. Additionally, entries should include planning details and information, any research conducted, development of interview questions (if applicable), all field notes, and conclusions and reflections drawn from the project. You must include a log/record of the hours you complete for the project. The electronic notebook is an open-ended document but should be written in a manner that is clear and coherent so that another researcher could understand and even replicate your work.

NOTE: To receive a final grade in LTCY 527 you must complete all components of the field experience and related assignments required for the course AND you must upload the critical performance to the Electronic Portfolio.

The previously-stated policy on late work applies even in circumstances when the student is given an incomplete ("X") for failure to upload an assignment to the Electronic Portfolio System. Students requesting an incomplete for another reason must contact the instructor to ask for an incomplete, which may or may not be granted, depending on the instructor's judgment regarding the circumstances of the student's request. According to the Graduate catalog on p.17, "A grade of 'X' (incomplete) is given only when a relatively small amount of work is not completed because of illness or other reason satisfactory to the instructor. "An 'X' received by a student will automatically become an "F" unless removed within twelve (12) weeks of the next full term (summer excluded). The grade of 'X' will continue to appear as the initial grade on the student's transcript, along with the revised grade."

Plagiarism Policy:

To represent ideas or interpretations taken from another source as one's own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense. The academic work of students must be their own. Students must give the author(s) credit for any source material used. To lift content directly from a source without giving credit is a flagrant act. To present a borrowed passage after having changed a few words, even if the source is cited, is also plagiarism. Please read and know that you are responsible for the content on this webpage:

<http://www.pampetty.com/plagiarism.htm>

As you begin your first assignments, be sure that you are not crossing the line into plagiarism. It is a serious issue and will not be taken lightly. Please read about [Avoiding Plagiarism](#).

Disability Accommodations Statement:

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Student Disability Services in DUC A-200 of the Student Success Center in Downing University Center. Please do not request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

Website Addresses:

Teacher-oriented sites:

Kentucky Department of Education: <http://www.kde.state.ky.us>

International Reading Association: <http://www.reading.org>

Children's Literature Web Guide: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown>

ERIC Clearing on Reading, English & Communication: http://www.indiana.edu/~eric_rec/index.html

Booklist (reviews): <http://www.ala.org/booklist/>

Instructional Framework: Introduction to Teaching Strategies:
<http://edservices.aea7.k12.ia.us/framework/strategies/>

[Instructional Framework: Introduction to Teaching Strategies](#)

Teaching strategies from Facing History:
<http://www.facinghistory.org/teachingstrategies>

Bibliography

Au, K. H. (1993). *Literacy instruction in multicultural settings*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

Banks, J. A. & Tucker, M. "Multiculturalism's Five Dimensions" NEA Today Online.
www.learner.org/workshops/socialstudies/pdf/.../3.Multiculturalism

Blair, T. and Jones, D. (1998). *Preparing student teachers for pluralistic classrooms*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Delpit, L. (1995). The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people's children. In Delpit, L. (ed). *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom*. New York: NY: The New Press.

Donelan, R. W., Neal, G. A. & Jones, D. L. (1994). The promise of *Brown* and the reality of academic grouping: The tracks of my tears. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 63(3), 376-387.

Eldridge, D. (1996). When the shoe won't fit: Sizing up teachers' concerns about and responses to diversity in the language arts classroom. *Language Arts*, 73, 298-304.

Gay, G. (2000). Challenges and perspectives. In *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research and Practice* (pp. 1-20). New York: NY. Teachers College, Columbia University.

Howard, G. R. (1999). *We can't teach what we don't know: White teachers, multiracial schools*. New York: NY. Teachers College, Columbia University.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2001). *Crossing over to canaan: The journey of new teachers in diverse classrooms*. NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Lewis, C. (2001). *Literary practices as social acts: Power, status, and cultural norms in the classroom*. NY: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Professional Journals:

Action in Teacher Education	Journal of Reading
American Educational Research Journal	Journal of Reading Behavior
Black Issues in Higher Education	Journal of Teacher Education
Bulletin of the Council on Interracial Books for Children	Language Arts
Education and Urban Society	New Directions in Education
Education for the Disadvantaged Child	Reform
Education Week	Phi Delta Kappan
Educational Horizons	Reading Research and Instruction
Educational Leadership	Reading Research Quarterly
Elementary School Journal	Social Education
English Journal	TESOL Quarterly
Equity & Excellence (Integrated Education)	The Reading Teacher
Harvard Educational Review	The Teacher Educator
Journal of Educational Thought	Urban Education
Journal of Negro Education	